

Downtown Bellevue Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center Plan

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Background:

- The 2006 revised State Commute Trip Reduction law has an option for cities to designate an area as a “Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center,” or GTEC.
- The GTEC concept allows a city to create a customized plan with potential state funding to reduce drive-alone trips and vehicle miles traveled in areas of dense employment and population.
- The state concept is to broaden the reach of CTR to employers, employees, and others not reached under the current Commute Trip Reduction program.

Why is the City Creating a GTEC Plan?

- To retain mobility and access both to and within the downtown for visitors, customers, and delivery and service vehicles in the face of downtown job and population growth.
- Developing a GTEC plan will likely allow us utilize state funds to develop a customized commute trip reduction program for the downtown.
- The GTEC plan will quantify our goals by setting a target for the planning horizon year of 2011, and will identify how we plan to meet that target.
- The GTEC plan will strengthen and consolidate efforts that encourage and promote the benefits of reducing drive-alone trips and vehicle miles traveled.

GTEC Plan Approach:

- Audiences include downtown employers, property managers, employees, and residents.
- Efforts will include raising awareness, addressing perceived and actual barriers, and customizing commute activities and programs to meet specific needs.
- The GTEC plan will largely focus on smaller employers. A market analysis in 2006 revealed a low level of awareness about travel options among small employers (those with 99 or fewer employees = 98% of downtown employers).

GTEC Plan Elements:

- The plan will include a comprehensive inventory of the existing and future baseline support for alternative modes – including transportation network and facilities, transit services, land use, and City plans/policies
- GTEC planning includes identification of gaps that need addressing in order to further trip reduction goals.

GTEC Plan Elements (cont.):

- The GTEC will establish a trip reduction target for the entire Downtown (not just CTR employers) for 2011.
- The GTEC plan will identify policy needs and barriers related to reducing trips, and can set the stage for policy changes, if needed, for the future.

GTEC Strategies:

- Strategies will be laid out for meeting trip reduction targets and will be about encouraging and facilitating mode shift. Employee commute choices can be affected by direct marketing campaign, or through their employers or property managers. Potential promotional strategies include:
 - FlexPass promotions
 - Transit route promotion
 - Outreach to residents (In Motion)
 - City TDM brand update and new website
 - Building-based trip reduction programs
 - I-405 mitigation – Area FlexPass promotion, hospitality industry outreach
 - Employer commute program consulting services
 - Employer recognition programs
- Other strategies relate to the framework of policies, facilities, and services. The GTEC plan will address revision and enforcement of the City's TMP code, and look at capital needs such as sidewalks and wayfinding. A general strategy will be to engage in further study of other City policies and remain open to beneficial changes during the time the plan is in effect (2008-2011).

Financing:

- The GTEC plan will potentially receive funding from the State to implement the strategies.
- Sufficient local match is already available. Local match can include public and private moneys already programmed for various activities to be included under the GTEC.

Timeline:

- February – June 2007 – Develop draft GTEC plan
- July 2007 January 2008 – Regional and State review, certification, evaluation for funding
- February 2008 – Bellevue City Council adoption of final GTEC plan (if state funding awarded)
- 2008-2011 – GTEC Plan implementation